ARCH 551 – Contemporary Issues in Architecture

Ball State University | Wayne Estopinal College of Architecture and Planning |
Department of Architecture | Fall 2026 | Dixon | Course Syllabus

COURSE / CRN: ARCH 551 Contemporary Issues in Architecture

CREDITS: 3 Credit Hours

LOCATION / TIME: Online

INSTRUCTORS: Emile Dixon, **Email:** eedixon@bsu.edu ,

OFFICE HOURS: Meetings (in person, online, via phone, etc.) by appointment.
Please request by email or phone. Mon & Wed 8:30 am -12:00 pm
@CapIndy Center

COURSE URL: via Canvas website at bsu.instructure.com

ARCH 551 CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN ARCHITECTURE (3)
Introduction to the essential role that architecture plays in promoting socially and environmentally just communities by acknowledging the values of human rights, social equity, and the dignity of every human being. Exploration of contemporary, social, cultural, political, and economic discourse in establishing design criteria and creating frameworks for design interventions. Understand the ethical issues involved in the exercise of professional judgment in architectural design.

STUDENTS LEARNING OBJECTIVE OUTCOMES

TOPIC EXPLORATION AND DISCUSSION
This course is primarily structured around the exploration and discussion of a series of critical issues in architecture and theory. Each week will primarily focus on the discussion of a new Topic based on a set of assigned readings.

TOPIC RESEARCH AND DOCUMENTATION
For each Topic, a team of students will collect a set of research sources and create an annotated bibliography. A second team of students will document a series of related design precedents. At the end of the semester, the sources and precedents for all of the Topics will be compiled into a single reference document for the students' future use.

TOPIC PAPER
Each student will write a paper based on the exploration of their assigned Topic as it relates to their own architectural interests.

NAAB PROGRAM CRITERIA

- **PC.1 Career Paths**—How the program ensures that students understand the paths to becoming licensed as an architect in the United States and the range of available career opportunities that utilize the discipline's skills and knowledge.

- **PC.4 History and Theory**—How the program ensures that students understand the histories and theories of architecture and urbanism, framed by diverse social, cultural, economic, and political forces, nationally and globally.

NAAB STUDENT CRITERIA

SC.2 Professional Practice—How the program ensures that students understand professional ethics, the regulatory requirements, the fundamental business processes relevant to architecture practice in the United States, and the forces influencing change in these subjects.

LATE POLICY

- All assignments are due by midnight EST/EDT or as specified on the indicated dates.
- Assignments posted after the indicated due dates will be subject to a loss of 10% of the available points for each day late.
- Technical issues are not valid excuses for late work unless the problem stems from Canvas servers.
- Canvas will not accept assignments for grading after 11:59 pm on the final day of class.
- All assignments should be submitted as PDFs unless otherwise indicated in the assignment description.

Unless otherwise indicated, assignments should be submitted using the assignment link in the module. GRADING POLICY My policy is that appropriate evaluation of your academic performance is integral to your learning experience. In the absence of mistakes, fraud, bad faith or incompetence, I will be the key decision-maker on the assignment of grades. For information on grade appeal, consulttheBallStatewebsite

ACADEMICINTEGRITY/PLAGIARISM POLICY

The integrity of the classes offered by any academic institution solidifies the foundation of its mission and cannot be sacrificed to expediency, ignorance, or blatant fraud. Therefore, I will enforce rigorous standards of academic integrity in all aspects and assignments of this course. Please review the University's AcademicIntegrityPolicy.

AI POLICY

The use of AI has a future in the profession of architecture. However, in this class any fabrication or reuse of someone else's work (even if yours from a previous semester or another student's work) will be regarded as plagiarism. Any writing, text, graphics or any work produced by AI will also be considered plagiarism.

Cheating, plagiarism, or other violations will not be permitted in this class and you will be reported to the Department, College, and the University. If you are accused and proven of cheating or plagiarism, you could fail this course and possibly be removed from the University.

For all assignments, you must work independently by yourself. Sharing of files is not permitted for any reason.

VIOLATIONS

- Examples of academic integrity include but are not limited to:
- Working with another person on any assignment other than authorized group projects.
- Sharing or allowing others to access your files, whether done with permission or not.
- Use or possession of a file created by someone else.
- Reusing work from another semester, course, or section.
- Fraudulent submission of work.
- Impersonating someone else or having them impersonate you.
- Making fraudulent or dishonest statements regarding your work.
- Soliciting others to complete work for you.
- Posting course files and resources on study or content sharing websites. ThePlagiarismTutorialfrom UNCLibraries provides you with a great foundation in Academic Integrity.

PLAGARISM DETECTION: The campus subscribes to Turnitin SimCheck, a plagiarism prevention service, through Canvas. You may need to submit written assignments to Turnitin SimCheck. Student work will be used for plagiarism detection and for no other purpose. The student may indicate in writing to the instructor that he/she refuses to participate in the plagiarism detection process, in which case the instructor can use other electronic means to verify the originality of their work.

It is your responsibility to approach academic integrity with honesty. Your work is your own. Please use primary or peer-reviewed sources (books, journals, magazines, etc) for reference when possible and quote all your sources properly. You are allowed to have only 3 internet resources for the semester, that need to be approved by me (no Wikipedia, etc.). Ball State Department of Architecture Student Academic Ethics Policy:

https://www.bsu.edu/about/administrativeoffices/associateprovost/services/studentethics

UNIVERSITY CODE OF STUDENT SRIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Students are expected to read, understand, and adhere to these community standards.https://www.bsu.edu/about/administrativeoffices/studentrights/policiesandprocedures/studentcode

RULES OF CONDUCT

While electronics are good and useful, I hope that you will limit your use of cell phones, computers and electronics that are not being used for production or research during lectures/recordings. Just like being in an actual architecture office, communication and collaboration are key to learning and we need to be aware of what's happening. Please be civil and practice respect during your participation time.

CODE OF STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES
Students are expected to read, understand, and adhere to these community standards.
https://www.bsu.edu/about/administrativeoffices/studentrights/policiesandprocedures/studentcode

STUDENT ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY
Students must comply with and are responsible for knowing the student academic ethics policy, as published in the Ball State University Student Handbook. Cheating on exams, plagiarizing papers, etc. will not be tolerated.
https://www.bsu.edu/about/administrativeoffices/vice-provost/student-services/academic-integrity

STUDIO CULTURE POLICY
Students are expected to read, understand, and adhere to these departmental studio culture expectations. https://www.bsu.edu/-/media/www/departmentalcontent/architecture/pdf/architecture%20pdfs/bsu_architecture_studio_culture_policy_24apr18.pdf

COUNSELING AND HEALTH SERVICES
Counseling and Health Services' Outreach and Special Programs mission is to assist students in reaching their personal and educational goals and removing barriers to learning. To request a program please call 285-1736.

GRADING SYSTEM &SCALE:

Grade descriptions are as follows (describing the quality of both products and process):

A (93+), **A-** (90-92), **B+** (87-89), **B** (83-86), **B-** (80-82), **C+** (77-79), **C** (70-76), **D** (60-69)

F (below 60)

A, A- excellent and exceptional quality work (going above and beyond minimal project requirements)

B+, B, B- good quality work that is above average

C+, C, C- average quality work

D+, D, D- below average quality work, just above failure

F not acceptable quality work

ATTENDANCE POLICY LATE WORK

You must participate in this online course. Please learn time management and make time weekly for this class and its activities. Think of this class as your first real office job. Late work will be accepted by will 10% deduction for grade each day the assignment is late. Participation in all aspects of this class is required. If you have a medical or family emergency (including funerals, etc.), please let me know as soon as possible so I can arrange your missed work/time. You are responsible for making up any missed class time, presentations, or assignments.

ONLINE PARTICIPATION POLICY

You are expected to actively participate in the course (however, on your own time). You should be willing and ready to communicate with me and your classmates online if needed regularly. You will participate in weekly activities in your course. You must log into your course 3 to 4 times a week and check your official BSU University email account daily. Doing so will allow you to view announcements, participate in class activities, prepare for and complete assignments and assessments. You are expected to complete all assignments, projects and any other activities by the due date. It is implied that you will not record any instructors, peers or others without their knowledge or share videos without permission.

FEED BACK POLICY

- I will try to return email from your official BSU address, within 24 hours during business days and within 48 hours on the weekend.
- I will read every discussion post, but I don't always personally comment on the posts.
- I will make every effort to grade your projects no later than within 5-10 business days of submission.
- Please feel free to email me before that time if you have any questions or concerns about your performance in class.

TOPICAL COURSE SCHEDULE

Please complete the required exercises by class on Friday of each week. They will be posted on CANVAS for your use. They are supplemental to the information we will be covering in class. It is your responsibility to keep up with the assignments during this class. I suggest taking notes in your notebook/sketchbook or printing them and taking notes in margins to ensure you fully grasp the concepts covered. **Biweekly assignments are typically due onFridays. SeeCanvas for deadlines.**

This syllabus and schedule are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances.
TEXTBOOKS/LEARNING RESOURCES(onreserve inlibrary andviaonline course reserves) General:

- **The Craft of Research 3rd** edition Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, Joseph M. Williams_ the University of Chicago Press Chicago & London

- **Architecture Research Methods 2nd** edition Linda Groat David Wang Wiley
- **Theorizing A new Agenda for Architecture an anthology of Architectural 1965-1995**_ Kat Nesbit Princeton Architectural Press

Course Policies:

Rules of Conduct / Honesty & Ethics

Architecture is a licensed profession. Entry into, and continued participation within, the architecture profession is predicated upon honesty and the exercise of ethical behavior. This course is an excellent place to practice these attributes. Day-to-day course operations assume that all participants behave ethically, which should make the learning environment more relaxed and enjoyable. Do NOT violate this trust.

STUDIO CULTURE POLICY

The *Studio Culture Policy* establishes guidance for a positive and respectful learning environment in which the Department's students, faculty, staff and administration can reach their full academic potential. The goal for the learning environment of the Department is a highly collaborative one; emphasizing the need for group and individual growth within each scholar of the Department.

This Studio Culture Policy outlines the criteria in order to foster this environment: bsu.edu/-/media/www/departmentalcontent/architecture/pdf/architecture pdfs/bsu_architecture_studio_culture_policy_24apr18.pdf?sc_lang=en&hash=73602 0D0785F27A11A7BDC8B7A288007938D0722

Absences

Absences will be excused for the following: funeral and bereavement leave, jury duty, late course addition, military absences, observance of religious holidays, pregnancy leave, student-athletes participating in University- or department-approved activities, and university advisories.

Students may encounter other circumstances (e.g. car accidents, job interviews) that result in course absences. Only faculty members can excuse these absences and adjustments are at the discretion of the instructor. Where possible, and with sufficient documentation, faculty should support student educational activities.

Consider field-specific best practices as well as student well-being. In general, students are expected to notify all their instructors once they anticipate being absent for any reason (e.g., funeral) or as soon as possible after the absence begins (e.g., unexpected injury or illness). The student may need to provide documentation (with confidential information redacted when appropriate) to each instructor if requested.

University Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities Policies:

Students are expected to read, understand, and adhere to these community standards: bsu.edu/about/administrativeoffices/student conduct/policiesandprocedures/studentcode

COPYRIGHT AND FAIR USE

The university expects all members of the university community to familiarize themselves and to follow copyright and fair use requirements. You are individually and solely responsible for violations of copyright and fair use laws. The university will neither protect nor defend you nor assume any responsibility for employee or student violations of fair use laws.

Violations of copyright laws could subject you to federal and state civil penalties and criminal liability as well as disciplinary action under university policies. To help familiarize yourself with copyright and fair use policies, please consult Ball State University's Guidelines for Copyright Compliance, available through the University Libraries.

Copyrights and the Unauthorized Sale of Course Notes
Students may not reproduce, distribute or publicly post their course materials without faculty permission. Please be advised that students selling or distributing course materials may violate the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities and/or the Information Technology Users' Privileges and Responsibilities policy. Any violations to such code or policy may be referred to the Director of Student Rights and Community Standards.

Title IX
Ball State University is committed to providing a safe and inclusive learning environment for all students. If you or someone you know has experienced sexual harassment—including sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking, please know that you are not alone. The University offers support services and resources. For more information or to report an incident, please visit **bsu.edu/titleix** or contact the Title IX Coordinator at 765-285-1545 or at **titleix@bsu.edu**.

As your instructor, I am a mandatory reporter under the Title IX policy and required to report any information I receive about possible sexual harassment. This includes information shared in class discussions, assignments, or private conversations.

What happens after I report? The Title IX Coordinator will email the person who experienced sexual harassment (complainant) and invite them to schedule a meeting. If the complainant **chooses** to meet with the Title IX Coordinator,

Title IX Coordinator will offer supportive measures (e.g., counseling, extensions on deadlines, course-related adjustments, changes to work or class schedules, and/or referrals to campus offices), review the policy, and discuss options to move forward.

If a complaint is filed by the complainant or the University, an investigation will begin following University policy.

For additional information, including the full Title IX policy and ways to report, go To Www.Bsu.Edu/Titleix.

- The Title IX Policy
- Code Of Student Rights And
- Responsibilities Indiana Code 21-
- 39.5 2-4 Complaint Procedure
- Equal Opportunity And Affirmative
- Action Policy Whistleblower
- Protection Policy
- Freedom Of
- Expression Statement
- Anti-harassment
- Policy

LEARNING CENTER
The Learning Center offers free Tutoring and Academic Coaching for many courses at Ball State. Students can make appointments online (Zoom) or in-person (NQ 350) appointments. To make an appointment, visit myballstate.bsu.edu and click on “Navigate” in the Academic Tools section, or just go directly to **bsu.navigate.eab.com**.

Testing accommodations for students with disabilities are available for students who have received

the appropriate documentation from Disability Services. Tests may be administered in the Learning Center.

Supplemental Instruction is available in select courses. If you have an SI leader for your course, that person will provide students with information for the first week of school regarding weekly study sessions. For more information about Learning Center programming, visit **bsu.edu/learningcenter** or call 765-285-1006. Follow us on Instagram: **BallStateLC**.

WRITING CENTER
All writers improve with practice and feedback, so as a student in this course, you are encouraged to use the Writing Center (in Robert Bell 295 during weekdays, Bracken Library First Floor West in the evenings, or online during any of our regularly scheduled hours) to get additional feedback on your writing.

The Writing Center offers free planning, feedback, and accountability sessions (in person and online) to all students composing essays, reports, reflections, research projects, web content, lesson plans, slideshows, poster presentations, resumes, and other digital or print texts. To schedule a free appointment to discuss your writing, go to **bsu.edu/writingcenter**. Online and in-person appointments are available; however, plan ahead because appointments book quickly!

COUNSELING AND HEALTH SERVICES

The Ball State University Counseling Center offers free and confidential services to all students. The Counseling Center is located in Lucina Hall, Room 320. To schedule an appointment, you can contact us at 765-285-1736. Ball State also offers a 24/7 Crisis Line, which can be reached at 765-285-HOPE (4673). The Crisis Line is a mental health resource for those who are struggling with any mental health concerns, including thoughts of self-harm and/or suicide.

At the Ball State Counseling Center, we see students for a variety of reasons, some of which include homesickness, relationship concerns, anxiety, and depression. At your first appointment, you will work with a therapist to create a plan that will connect you with resources that best fit your needs. We assist students with getting connected to therapy at our Center as well as connecting students to self-help resources, other on-campus resources, and community-based resources. All Ball State students also have access to several on-demand, self-help resources through a variety of different platforms. All of these resources, including a direct link to our website, can be found **here**.

THE SPEAKING CENTER
The **Speaking Center** is a free resource available to all members of the BSU community wanting to improve their public speaking abilities. We offer personalized coaching designed to help you become a more confident and effective speaker. Our trained coaches provide constructive feedback and support throughout the entire speech preparation process, whether you are in the early stages of brainstorming ideas and organizing your thoughts, or you need to practice your delivery and refine your message.

The Center is in the David Letterman Communication and Media Building, room 302. To schedule an appointment, please access us through your Navigate app or use this **direct link** to sign up for a time**.** Appointments are available both in person and on Zoom. Appointments are available in person, on Zoom, and in virtual reality (VR) for those interested in practicing in an immersive speaking environment.

GENERATIVE AI STATEMENT
[It is up to the faculty and/or their academic unit to determine if, when, and how generative AI use is permitted. It is strongly recommended that faculty clearly communicate their expectations about students' use of AI in their course. Note that many applications (e.g. Grammarly, Microsoft Word, Canva, OneNote, and Evernote) have AI built-in features such as text predictions and AutoComplete

as well as organizing and summarizing information. Below are three potential approaches, published by the **University of Pittsburgh**, which can be copied verbatim or modified to fit your needs. Faculty are encouraged to engage in dialogue with their students about the use of AI and academic integrity. For AI information, tools, resources, and courses, see **AI Initiatives at BSU**.]

Some Use of Generative AI Permitted Under Some Circumstances or With Explicit Permission
During this class, we may use ChatGPT or other generative AI applications. You will be informed as to when, where, and how these tools are permitted to be used, along with guidance for attribution. [Indicate your expectations regarding use of applications with AI built-in features]. Any use outside of this permission constitutes a violation of Ball State University's **Student Academic Ethics Policy**.

Broader Use of Generative AI Permitted/Encouraged Within Specified Guidelines
The use of Generative AI tools, including ChatGPT, is encouraged/permitted in this course for students who wish to use them. You may choose to use AI tools to help brainstorm assignments or projects or to revise existing work you have written. [Indicate your expectations regarding use of applications with AI built-in features]. However, you must cite any AI-generated material that informed your work. Using an AI tool to generate content without proper attribution constitutes a violation of Ball State University's **Student Academic Ethics Policy**.

Workers Compensation – please tell your graduate students too
Regardless of the nature or severity, **all injuries incurred when on-the-job** must be reported to supervision at once, during the same shift on which the injury occurred. This applies to faculty, professional personnel, staff, Graduate Assistants, and student employees. Information on Worker's Compensation including medical treatment, reporting procedures, and absences is available at https://www.bsu.edu/about/administrativeoffices/employee-relations/workerscompensation. Please share this information with those in your unit who supervise GA's and student employees. Please note 1) if the employee is on campus, but not yet clocked in or has recently clocked out, they may still be "on-the-job" for this policy; 2) Workers Compensation may also apply in performance of work duties at off-campus locations. Questions about the policy or procedure may be sent to Employee Relations at emprelations@bsu.edu, to Andrea Stuffel at astuffel@bsu.edu, to Tara Green at tlgreen@bsu.edu, or by calling 765-285-1854 or 285-1843